CHAPTER 247

LABOR AND INDUSTRY

HOUSE BILL 21-1149

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also SENATOR(S) Story, Buckner, Danielson, Fenberg, Ginal, Gonzales, Jaquez Lewis, Kolker, Lee, Moreno, Pettersen, Priola, Winter

AN ACT

CONCERNING SUPPORTING AN ENERGY SECTOR CAREER PATHWAY FOR COLORADO, AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, MAKING AN APPROPRIATION.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 24-46.3-104, add (5.5) as follows:

24-46.3-104. Career pathways - design - legislative declaration - definitions. (5.5) (a) As used in this subsection (5.5), "energy sector" means current and emerging establishments and partnerships engaged in electromechanical generation and maintenance, electrical energy transmission and distribution, energy efficiency and environmental technology, and renewable energy production. The energy sector includes but is not limited to occupations and activities relating to the development, installation, and maintenance of products or technologies in the areas of carbon capture, energy storage, building electrification, electric vehicles, charging infrastructure, hydrogen fuel cell technology, and renewable natural gas.

(b) The state council and partners, including the department of natural resources, shall create an industry-driven energy sector career pathway for implementation by or before the 2022-23 academic year. The state council shall comply with the provisions of this section, including career pathway design, components, implementation, industry review, and promotion of the energy sector career pathway.

Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material added to existing law; dashes through words or numbers indicate deletions from existing law and such material is not part of the act.

(c) The strengthening photovoltaic and renewable careers (SPARC) workforce development program, created in part 5 of this article 46.3, shall provide money and other supports for in-demand and growing occupations in the energy sector career pathway created pursuant to this subsection (5.5).

SECTION 2. In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add** part 5 of article 46.3 of title 24 as follows:

PART 5 STRENGTHENING PHOTOVOLTAIC AND RENEWABLE CAREERS (SPARC) WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

24-46.3-501. Legislative declaration. (1) The general assembly finds and declares that:

- (a) The state workforce development council selected energy as a target industry for career pathway systems development;
- (b) The selection of energy as a target industry for career pathway systems development is in alignment with the statewide goal to position Colorado as a leader in the clean energy economy by setting a path to reach one hundred percent renewable energy for the electric grid by 2040:
- (c) The federal government has indicated its intent to take aggressive action on climate change by rejoining the Paris climate agreement, achieving a carbon-pollution-free power sector by 2035, and ensuring the United States is on a path to a net-zero economy by 2050;
- (d) In passing House Bill 19-1261, the general assembly established statewide, science-based greenhouse gas emissions reductions goals of at least twenty-six percent by 2025, fifty percent by 2030, and ninety percent by 2050, of emissions levels from 2005;
- (e) The Colorado energy office, Colorado department of public health and environment, Colorado department of transportation, Colorado department of natural resources, and Colorado department of agriculture released the "Greenhouse Gas Pollution Reduction Roadmap" in January of 2021 to establish a statewide strategy for each sector to meet the greenhouse gas reduction targets specified in House Bill 19-1261;
- (f) The Colorado energy office released the "Colorado Electric Vehicle Plan 2020" to guide a large-scale transition of the state's transportation system to zero-emission vehicles, including a goal of nine hundred forty thousand electric vehicles on our roads by 2030 and nearly one hundred percent of all vehicles by 2050;
 - (g) The Colorado air quality control commission adopted the

ZERO-EMISSION VEHICLE RULE, ESTABLISHING THE COLORADO ZERO-EMISSION VEHICLE PROGRAM TO INCREASE THE AVAILABILITY OF ELECTRIC VEHICLES IN THE STATE, WHICH WILL REQUIRE ADDITIONAL INVESTMENT IN ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING SYSTEMS;

- (h) Additionally, more than fifty local jurisdictions throughout the state have adopted the 2018 international energy conservation code to help existing buildings adapt to new technologies and improve energy efficiencies in New Construction;
- (i) These federal and state commitments to address the climate crisis will lead to significant investments in the energy sector, which will require a diverse and well-trained workforce;
- (j) Further, Launching regional energy partnerships will create a foundation of strong industry leadership, collaboration, and investment to support an industry-driven energy sector career pathway;
- (k) In 2019, there were sixty-two thousand four hundred twenty full-time clean energy employees in Colorado. Between 2014 and 2019 there was a fifteen percent growth in all energy jobs in Colorado, and these jobs are projected to grow another nine percent from 2019 to 2024.
- (I) THE STATE MEDIAN HOURLY EARNINGS FOR CLEAN ENERGY OCCUPATIONS IN COLORADO PROVIDES AN ABOVE-AVERAGE LIVING WAGE;
- (m) Money to provide training under the SPARC program should prioritize individuals directly impacted by job loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic or due to an industry decline since January 1, 2019;
- (n) Further, Black communities, indigenous communities, communities of color, and low-income communities have endured the environmental impacts of polluting industries within their communities for many years; and
- (o) Therefore, while Colorado begins to work toward equity and environmental justice, these populations and communities should be prioritized for training within the energy sector career pathway.
- (2) Therefore, the general assembly declares that the creation of an industry-driven energy sector career pathway pursuant to section 24-46.3-104, implemented and supported through the SPARC program created in this part 5, is a significant step toward establishing Colorado as a leader in the clean energy economy, providing high-quality education and training, creating high-paying jobs, and protecting Colorado's environment.
- **24-46.3-502. Definitions.** As used in this part 5, unless the context otherwise requires:
 - (1) "DEPARTMENT" MEANS THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

CREATED IN SECTION 24-1-121.

- (2) "Department of higher education" means the department of higher education created in Section 24-1-114.
- (3) "Energy sector" has the same meaning as defined in section 24-46.3-104 (5.5).
- (4) "Energy sector career pathway" means the energy sector career pathway created pursuant to section 24-46.3-104 (5.5).
- (5) "SPARC PROGRAM" MEANS THE STRENGTHENING PHOTOVOLTAIC AND RENEWABLE CAREERS (SPARC) WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM CREATED IN SECTION 24-46.3-503.
- (6) "SPARC PROGRAM FUND" MEANS THE SPARC PROGRAM FUND CREATED IN SECTION 24-46.3-505.
- (7) "STATE BOARD FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION" MEANS THE STATE BOARD FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION CREATED IN SECTION 23-60-104.
- (8) "State council" means the state work force development council created in section 24-46.3-101.
- **24-46.3-503.** Strengthening photovoltaic and renewable careers (SPARC) workforce development program creation use of funds. (1) There is created in the department the strengthening photovoltaic and renewable careers (SPARC) workforce development program as an initiative of the department, the state council, the state board for community colleges and occupational education, and the department of higher education.
- (2) The purpose of the SPARC program is to create capacity for and bolster training, apprenticeship, and education programs in the energy sector career pathway to increase employment in the energy sector, prioritizing in-demand and growing occupations in the energy sector, where insufficient training, education, and apprenticeship programs exist to meet growing demand. The SPARC program will capitalize on the components of the energy sector career pathway, including competency-based education and assessment, modularized curricula, integrated credit and noncredit programs, stacked and latticed credentials, apprenticeship programs, and comprehensive, personalized student support and career guidance.
- (3) In any state fiscal year in which the general assembly appropriates money for the SPARC program, the department, the state council, the state board for community colleges and occupational education, and the department of higher education shall use the money appropriated to expand the capacity of training programs and for the following purposes, as applicable, to support apprenticeships, training, and education in the

ENERGY SECTOR CAREER PATHWAY:

- (a) CAREER AND TRAINING COUNSELING;
- (b) CAREER AND ACADEMIC EXPLORATION AND PLANNING;
- (c) SCHOLARSHIPS;
- (d) Employer-provided training;
- (e) APPRENTICESHIPS;
- (f) CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION;
- (g) Work-based training opportunities;
- (h) NEED-BASED SERVICES;
- (i) Transportation;
- (i) Equipment and supplies;
- (k) RETENTION SERVICES;
- (1) TRAINING PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION;
- (m) SPARC PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION AND ADMINISTRATION, INCLUDING REPORTING ACTIVITIES; AND
- (n) Other purposes as determined by the department, the state council, the state board for community colleges and occupational education, and the department of higher education that achieve the purposes of this part 5.
- (4) Subject to available appropriations, the department, in consultation with the state council, the state board for community colleges and occupational education, and the department of higher education, shall determine the amount of funding allocated for the purposes described in subsection (3) of this section for public institutions of higher education in Colorado, local workforce development areas, and other partners, including community-based nonprofit organizations. Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, the department, the state council, the state board for community colleges and occupational education, and the department of higher education, as well as expenditures of money from the fund, are not subject to the provisions of the "Procurement Code", articles 101 to 112 of title 24.
- (5) (a) SPARC PROGRAM ACTIVITIES OR EXPENDITURES AUTHORIZED PURSUANT TO THIS PART 5 MUST NOT:
 - (I) CIRCUMVENT ANY STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS RELATED TO THE ACQUISITION

OF A PLUMBING OR ELECTRICAL LICENSE OR THE PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE ACT OF EITHER THE PLUMBING OR ELECTRICAL INDUSTRY OR ANY STATUTE THAT SPECIFICALLY DEFINES ANY RENEWABLE ENERGY WORK AS WITHIN THE SCOPE OF LICENSED PLUMBERS OR ELECTRICIANS OR PROPERLY SUPERVISED APPRENTICES; OR

- (II) CIRCUMVENT ANY ESTABLISHED INDUSTRY STANDARD FOR ON-THE-JOB TRAINING REQUIREMENTS OR CLASSROOM EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS OF THE ESTABLISHED COLORADO APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS REGISTERED THROUGH THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR OFFICE OF APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING OR A STATE APPRENTICESHIP COUNCIL RECOGNIZED BY THAT OFFICE.
- (b) To the extent possible, the SPARC program must support activities that support participation in Colorado apprenticeship programs registered through the United States department of labor office of apprenticeship training or a state apprenticeship council recognized by that office and prioritize programs that seek to help workers attain a professional credential, an industry standard certification, or a professional license.
- 24-46.3-504. Reporting requirements. (1) On or before November 1, 2022, and on or before November 1 each year thereafter until the repeal of the SPARC program, the state council shall submit a report to the house of representatives business affairs and labor committee, the house of representatives energy and environment committee, the house of representatives education committee, the senate business, labor, and technology committee, the senate transportation and energy committee, and the senate education committee, or their successor committees. At a minimum, the report must include a summary of the energy sector career pathway and its implementation and the SPARC program, including an accounting of how money was used pursuant to this part 5 to expand or support training, apprenticeship, and education programs in the energy sector career pathway to increase employment in the energy sector.
- (2) The department shall also present an executive summary of the annual report on the SPARC program at the department's annual presentation to the legislative committee of reference pursuant to the "State Measurement for Accountable, Responsive, and Transparent (SMART) Government Act", created in part 2 of article 7 of title 2.
- (3) FOR PURPOSES OF THE REPORTING REQUIREMENT SET FORTH IN THIS SECTION, THE DEPARTMENT MAY REQUEST DATA AND INFORMATION FROM ENTITIES RECEIVING OR USING MONEY APPROPRIATED FOR PURPOSES OF THIS PART 5.
- (4) Notwithstanding section 24-1-136 (11)(a)(I), the reporting requirement set forth in this section continues until the SPARC program repeals pursuant to section 24-46.3-506.
- **24-46.3-505. SPARC program fund creation appropriations from the fund.** (1) The SPARC program fund, referred to in this section as the "fund", is created in the state treasury. The fund consists of money

TRANSFERRED TO THE FUND PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (2) OF THIS SECTION AND ANY OTHER MONEY THAT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY MAY APPROPRIATE OR TRANSFER TO THE FUND. IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 24-36-114(1), THE STATE TREASURER SHALL CREDIT ALL INTEREST AND INCOME DERIVED FROM THE DEPOSIT AND INVESTMENT OF MONEY IN THE FUND TO THE GENERAL FUND.

- (2) On July 1, 2021, the state treasurer shall transfer five million dollars from the general fund to the fund.
- (3) (a) Subject to annual appropriation by the general assembly for the 2021-22, 2022-23, 2023-24, and 2024-25 state fiscal years, the department, the state council, the state board for community colleges and occupational education, and the department of higher education may expend money from the fund for purposes of this part 5.
- (b) Any money appropriated pursuant to this section in a state fiscal year that is not encumbered or expended at the end of that state fiscal year remains available for expenditure in the next fiscal year for the same purposes without further appropriation.
- (c) The General assembly may appropriate money from the fund to pay the direct and indirect costs incurred to administer the SPARC program.
- (4) The state treasurer shall transfer all unexpended and unencumbered money in the fund on June 30, 2026, to the general fund.
 - **24-46.3-506.** Repeal of part. This part 5 is repealed, effective July 1, 2026.
- **SECTION 3. Appropriation.** (1) For the 2021-22 state fiscal year, \$90,048 is appropriated to the department of labor and employment. This appropriation is from the SPARC program fund created in section 24-46.3-505 (1), C.R.S. To implement this act, the department may use this appropriation as follows:
- (a) \$68,513 for one-stop workforce center contracts, which amount is based on an assumption that the department will require an additional 1.0 FTE; and
- (b) \$21,535 for the Colorado workforce development council, which amount is based on an assumption that the council will require an additional 0.3 FTE.
- (2) For the 2021-22 state fiscal year, \$1,724,590 is appropriated to the department of higher education. This appropriation is from the SPARC program fund created in section 24-46.3-505 (1), C.R.S. To implement this act, the department may use this appropriation for the state board for community colleges and occupational education state system community colleges.
- **SECTION 4. Safety clause.** The general assembly hereby finds, determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety.

Approved: June 16, 2021